

A L F R E D:
A
M A S Q U E.

ACTED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL
IN
DRURY-LANE,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

Price One Shilling and Six-pence.

ALFRED:

MASQUED

THEATRE-ROYAL

DRURY-LANE

By His Majesty's Command

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*By J. Thomson &
D. Haller*

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR, opposite to Catharine-
Street, in the Strand.

M. DCC. LI,

ALFRED:

MASSOUE

ALFRED

THEATRE-ROYAL

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By His Majesty's Command

867026

LONDON

Printed for A. Milnes, at the Theatre

Street, in the Strand.

M. DCC. LII.

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Advertifement.

***H**AVING been obliged to discontinue the Duke of MARLBOROUGH's History for a few months past, till I could receive from a foreign country some papers of importance; that I might not be quite idle in the mean while, I read over, in order to improve, this MASQUE; the first draught of which had been written by the late Mr. THOMSON, in conjunction with me, several years ago. But, to fit it for the stage, I found it would be necessary to new-plan the whole, as well as write the particular scenes over again; to enlarge the design, and make ALFRED, what he should have been at first, the principal figure in his own MASQUE. This I have done; but, according to the present arrangement of the Fable, I was obliged to reject a great deal of what I had written in the other: neither could I retain, of my friend's part, more than three or four speeches, and a part of one song. I mention this expressly; that, whatever faults are found in the present performance, they may be charged, as they ought to be, entirely to my account.*

D. Mallet.

P R O L O G U E.

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

IN arms renown'd, for arts of peace ador'd,
ALFRED, the nation's father, more than lord,
A British author has presum'd to draw,
Struck deep, even now, with reverential awe;
And sets the godlike figure fair in view—
O may discernment find the likeness true.

When Danish fury, with wide-wasting hand,
Had spread pale fear, and ravage o'er the land,
This prince arising bade confusion cease,
Bade order shine, and blest his isle with peace;
Taught liberal arts to humanize the mind,
And heaven-born science to sweet freedom join'd.
United thus, the friendly sisters shone,
And one secur'd, while one adorn'd, his throne.
Amidst these honors of his happy reign,
Each Grace and every Muse compos'd his train:
As grateful servants, all exulting strove,
At once to spread his fame, and share his love.

To night, if aught of fiction you behold,
Think not, in Virtue's cause, the bard too bold.
If ever angels from the skies descend,
It must be—truth and freedom to defend.

Thus would our author please—be it your part,
If not his labors, to approve his heart.
True to his country's, and to honor's cause,
He fixes, there, his fame, and your applause;
Wishes no failing from your sight to hide,
But, by free BRITONS, will be freely try'd.

P E R S O N S.

ALFRED.	<i>Mr. GARRICK.</i>
<i>Earl of DEVON.</i>	<i>Mr. LEE.</i>
EDWIN.	<i>Mr. BURTON.</i>
HERMIT.	<i>Mr. BERRY.</i>
CORIN.	<i>Mr. BLAKES.</i>
<i>DANISH King.</i>	<i>Mr. SOWDON.</i>
<i>First DANE.</i>	<i>Mr. PALMER.</i>
<i>Second DANE.</i>	<i>Mr. MOZEEN.</i>
ELTRUDA.	<i>Miss BELLAMY.</i>
EMMA.	<i>Mrs. BENNET.</i>
SHEPHERDESS.	<i>Miss MINORS.</i>

The Vocal Parts by

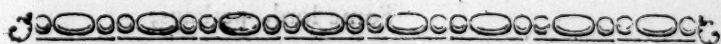
Mrs. CLIVE, Miss NORRIS, Mr. BEARD, Mr. REINHOLD, Mr. WILDER, Master VERNON, &c.

Shepherdesses, Soldiers, Attendants, Spirits.

The SCENE represents a Plain, surrounded with woods. On one side, a cottage; on the other, flocks and herds in distant prospect. A Hermit's cave in full view, over-hung with trees, wild and grotesque.



A L F R E D:
A
M A S Q U E.



A C T I. S C E N E I.

CORIN and EMMA appear at the door of their cottage.

Two SHEPHERDESSES.

First SHEPHERDESS sings.



*PEACE, the fairest child of heaven,
To whom the sylvan reign was given,
The vale, the fountain, and the grove,
With every softer scene of love;
Return, sweet Peace, to cheer the weeping swain:
Return, with Ease and Pleasure in thy train.*

B

EMMA,

EMMA, *coming forward.*

Shepherd, 'tis he. Against yon aged oak,
Pensive and lost in thought, he leans his head,

CORIN.

Soft : let us not disturb him. Gentle EMMA,
Poor tho he be, unfriended and unknown,
My pity waits with reverence on his fortune.
Modest of carriage, and of speech most gracious,
As if some saint or angel in disguise
Had grac'd our lowly cottage with his presence,
He steals, I know not how, into the heart,
And makes it pant to serve him. Trust me, EMMA,
He is no common man.

EMMA.

Some lord, perhaps,
Or valiant chief, that from our deadly foe,
The haughty, cruel, unbelieving *Dane*,
Seeks shelter here.

CORIN.

And shelter he shall find :
Who loves his country, is my friend and brother.
Behold him well. Fair manhood in it's prime,
Even thro the homely ruffet that conceals him,
Shines forth, and proves him noble.

EMMA.

'Tis most like,
He is not what his present fortunes speak him.
But, ah ! th' inhuman foe is all around us :
We dare not keep him here.

CORIN.

CORIN.

Thou hast not weigh'd

This island's force ; the deep defence of woods,
 Nature's own hand hath planted strong around ;
 The rough encumbrance of perplexing thorns,
 Of intertwining brakes that rise between,
 And choak up every inlet from abroad.
 Yet more ; thou know'st, beyond this woody verge
 Two rivers broad and rapid hem us in ;
 Along whose border spreads the gulphy pool,
 And trembling quagmire to betray the foot
 It's treacherous greensword tempts. One path alone
 Winds to this plain, so difficult and strait,
 My single arm, against a band of foes,
 Could long, perhaps, defend it.

EMMA.

Yet, my CORIN,

Revolve the stern decree of that fierce tyrant,
 The *Danish* king : " Who harbours, or relieves
 " An *English* captain, dies the death of traitors :
 " But who their haunts discovers, shall be safe,
 " And high rewarded."

CORIN.

Now, just heaven forbid,

An *Englishman* should ever count for gain
 What villainy must earn. No : are we poor ?
 Be honesty our riches. Are we mean,
 And humbly born ? The true heart makes us noble.
 These hands can toil ; can sow the ground and reap
 For thee and thy sweet babes. Our daily labour

Is daily wealth : it finds us bread and raiment,
 Could *Danish* gold give more ?

EMMA.

Alas the while !

That loyal faith is fled from hall and bower,
 To dwell with village-swains !

CORIN.

Ah look ! behold,

Where EDITH, all-abandon'd to despair,
 Hangs weeping o'er the brook.

Second SHEPHERDESS approaches slowly to soft music.

Is there not cause ?

She

She sings.

I.

*A youth adorn'd with every art,
To warm and win the coldest heart,
In secret mine possesst :
The morning bud that fairest blows,
The vernal oak that straitest grows,
His face and shape exprest.*

II.

*In moving sounds he told his tale,
Soft as the sighings of the gale
That wakes the flowery year.
What wonder he could charm with ease !
Whom happy nature form'd to please,
Whom love had made sincere.*

III.

*At morn he left me—fought, and fell ;
The fatal evening heard his knell,
And saw the tears I shed :
Tears that must ever, ever fall ;
For ah ! no sighs the past recall,
No cries awake the dead !*

CORIN.

CORIN.

Unhappy maid ! yet not alone in woe :
For look, where our sad guest, like some fair tree
Torn from the root by winter's cruel blast,
Lies on the ground o'erthrown.

EMMA.

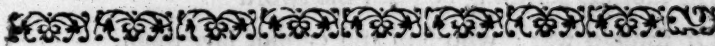
I weep, to see it !

CORIN.

Thou hast a heart sweet pity loves to dwell in :
But, dry thy tears, and lean on this just hope——
If yet to do away his country's shame,
To serve her bravely on some blest occasion ;
If for these ends this stranger sought our cottage,
The heavenly hosts are hovering here unseen,
To guard his sacred life, and bless us all.
But let us hence : he rises to embrace
His friend, a woodman of the neighbouring dale,
Whom late, as yester-evening star arose,
At his request I bid to meet him here,

SCENE

L



S C E N E II.

ALFRED, *Earl of DEVON.*

ALFRED.

How long, just heaven ! how long
Shall war's fell ravage desolate this land ?
All, all is lost—and ALFRED lives to tell it !
Are these things so ? and he without the means
Of great revenge ? cast down below the hope
Of succouring those he weeps for ?

DEVON.

Gracious ALFRED,

England's last hope, whose feeling goodness shews
What angels are ; to bear, with such a prince,
The worst of ills, exile, or chains, or death,
Is happiness, is glory.

ALFRED.

Ah ! look round thee—
That mud-built cottage is thy sovereign's palace.
Yon hind, whose daily toil is all his wealth,
Lodges and feeds him. Are these times for flattery ?
Or call it praise : such gaudy attributes
Would misbecome our best and proudest fortunes.
But what are mine ? What is this high-priz'd ALFRED ?
Among ten thousand wretches most undone !

That prince who sees his country laid in ruins,
 His subjects perishing beneath the sword
 Of foreign war ; who sees and cannot save them,
 Is but supreme in misery !—But on,
 Proceed, my lord ; compleat the mournful tale,
 My griefs broke off.

DEVON.

From yonder heath-clad hill,
 Far as my straining eye could shoot it's beam
 I look'd, and saw the progress of the foe,
 As of some tempest, some devouring tide,
 That ruins, without mercy, where it spreads.
 The riches of the year, the bread of thousands
 That liberal crown'd our plains from vale to hill,
 With intermingled forests, temples, towers,
 Now smok to heaven, one broad-ascending cloud.
 But oh for pity ! on each mountain's height,
 Shivering and sad the pale inhabitants,
 Gray-headed age and youth, all stood and mark'd
 This boundless ravage : motionless and mute,
 With hands to heaven up-rais'd, they stood and wept—
 My tears attended theirs—

ALFRED.

If this sad sight
 Could pain thee to such anguish, what must I
 Their king and parent feel ?

DEVON.

DEVON.

Sir, be of comfort.

Who has not known ill fortune, never knew
Himself, or his own virtue.

ALFRED.

Well—no more—

Complaint is for the vulgar: kings must act;
Restore a ruin'd state, or perish with it.
Despair shall be our strength—

DEVON.

Behold, my lord,

From yonder hazle copse, who issues forth,
And moves this way—a stranger—but his look
Speaks haste and apprehension—

ALFRED.

Ha! beyond

My utmost hope!—'Tis EDWIN—



S C E N E III.

ALFRED, DEVON, EDWIN.

ALFRED.

Hast thou ought

Of joyful to impart? or is the soul
Of *England* dead indeed?

C

EDWIN.

EDWIN.

My gracious master,
 This journey has been fruitful to our wish.
 Awak'd, as from the last and mortal trance,
 That soul, which seem'd extinguisht, lives again.
 By me assur'd, their sovereign still survives,
 Survives to take due vengeance on those robbers,
 Who violate the sanctity of leagues,
 The reverend seal of oaths; who basely broke,
 Like midnight ruffians, on the hour of peace,
 And stole a victory from men unarm'd;
 Of this assur'd, your people breathe once more.
 The spirit of our ancestors is up!
 The spirit of the free! and, with one voice
 Of happy omen, all demand their king.

ALFRED.

Then, heaven who knows our wrongs will deign to guide
 The virtue it inspires—My lord, how sound
 These tidings in your ears?

DEVON:

As the sure omen
 Of better fate, my heart receives and hails them.
 For know, my liege, the fury of those *Danes*,
 This last dire scene of total desolation,
 Will kindle up the flame to seven-fold fierceness;
 New-wing each shaft, edge every lifted sword,
 And drive—

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

A moment—EDWIN, yet inform me
What numbers have you gather'd? how dispos'd,
Where posted them?

EDWIN.

In these surrounding woods,
Soon as the shade of night descends to veil them,
A generous few, the veteran hardy gleanings
Of many a well-fought field, all at one hour,
Behind the rushy brook from hence due east,
By different paths, and in small parties meet,
Accounted at all points: and, as I judge,
Their numbers count twelve hundred.

ALFRED.

Ha! twelve hundred—

Incredible—soft—let me duly weigh
What I, unhoping, scarce believing, hear.
Something must, now, be done—Ay, that attempt
Is great—but greatly hazardous—why then,
Necessity, our just plea, must excuse
The desperate daring her hard law imposes.
Hear, my brave friends. One castle still is ours,
Tho' close begirt and shaken by the *Danes*.
DEVON, speed thither: find out that close path,
By EDWIN's eye and aid, which from the midst,
The central point of *Kinwith-forest* winds
In deep descent; and, under ground prolong'd,
Safe in the fortress ends.

DEVON.

Suppose me there :

What follows this, my lord ?

ALFRED.

Be it your part

To animate our brothers of the war,
Those *Englishmen*, who yet deserve that name.
The foe—dwell much on this—by our known weakness
Made daring and secure, will now the rein
Of discipline relax, and to loose revel
Indulge the midnight hour. Therefore, at three—
O count the clock with more than lovers' vigilance—
At three, that chosen band shall from behind,
Rising at once, with ALFRED at their head,
Assail the hostile camp : while your warm sally,
That very moment, pours upon it's front.
Hence : and success be thine.

DEVON.

On this our purpose,

The sacred cause of liberty and vengeance,
Smile, righteous heaven !

ALFRED.

Urge it home, my friend,

That each man's sword now wears upon it's point
The present age, and last posterity !
Farewell. EDWIN, within the hour return,
And find me here.

S C E N E



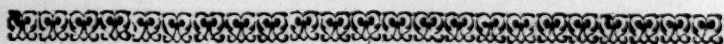
SCENE IV.

ALFRED:

Ha ! day declines apace:

What anxious thoughts, in this wild solitude,
My darker hours must know ? And now, the veil
Of evening, o'er these murmuring woods around,
A lonely horror spreads—But soft: the breeze
Is dumb ! and more than midnight silence reigns !
Why beats my bosom ?—Music ! Shield me, heaven !
Whence should it come ?—Hark !—now the measur'd strains,
In awful sweetness warbling, strike my sense,
As if some wing'd musician of the sky
Touch'd his ethereal harp.

SCENE



S C E N E V.

Solemn music is heard at a distance. It comes nearer in a full symphony: after which a single trumpet sounds a high and awakening air. Then the following stanzas are sung by two æreal Spirits.

First SPIRIT.

*Hear, ALFRED, father of the state,
Thy genius heaven's high will declare!
What proves the hero truly great,
Is never, never to despair.*

Both SPIRITS.

Is never to despair.

Second SPIRIT.

*Thy hope awake, thy heart expand
With all its vigour, all its fires:
Arise, and save a sinking land!
Thy country calls and heaven inspires.*

Both SPIRITS.

Earth calls and heaven inspires.

S C E N E



S C E N E VI.

ALFRED.

Am I awake ! and is it no illusion
That heaven thus deigns to look with mercy on me ?
Thus, by his ministers, to cheer my heart,
And warm it into hope ? But lo ! he comes,
Whom angels deign to visit and inspire,
The holy sage, descending from his cell
In yon hill's cavern'd side : sweet sylvan scene
Where shade and silence dwell !



S C E N E VII.

ALFRED, HERMIT.

ALFRED.

Thrice happy HERMIT !

Whom thus the heavenly habitants attend,
Blessing thy calm retreat ; while ruthless war
Fills the polluted land with blood and crimes.

In

In this extremity of *England's* fate,
 Led by thy sacred character, I come
 For comfort and advice. Say what remains,
 What yet remains to save our prostrate country?
 Nor scorn this anxious question even from me,
 A nameless stranger.

HERMIT:

ALFRED, *England's* king,
 All hail, and welcome to this humble cell.

ALFRED.

Amazement!—by these humble weeds obscur'd,
 I deem'd my state beyond discovery's reach:
 How is it then to thee alone reveal'd?

HERMIT.

Last night, when with a draught from that cool fountain
 I had my wholesome sober supper crown'd;
 As is my stated custom, forth I walk'd
 Beneath the solemn gloom and glittering sky,
 To feed my soul with prayer and meditation.
 And thus to inward harmony compos'd,
 That sweetest music of the grateful heart,
 Whose each emotion is a silent hymn,
 I to my couch retir'd. Strait on mine eyes
 A pleasing slumber fell, whose mystic power
 Seal'd up my senses, but enlarg'd my soul.
 Led by those spirits, who disclose futurity,
 I liv'd thro distant ages; felt the virtue,
 The great, the glorious passions that will fire
 Remote posterity; when guardian laws
 Are by the patriot, in the glowing senate,

Won from corruption ; when th' impatient arm
 Of liberty, invincible, shall scourge
 The tyrants of mankind—and when the deep,
 Thro all her swelling waves, from pole to pole
 Shall spread the boundless empire of thy sons.
 I saw thee, ALFRED, too—But o'er thy fortunes
 Lay clouds impenetrable.

ALFRED:

To heaven's will,
 In either fortune, mine shall ever bend
 With humblest resignation—Yet, O say,
 Does that unerring Providence, whose justice
 Has bow'd me to the dust ; whose ministers,
 Sword, fire and famine, scourge this sinful land,
 This tomb of it's inhabitants—does he
 Reserve me in his hand, the glorious instrument
 From fierce oppression to redeem my country ?

HERMIT.

What mortal eye, by his immediate beam
 Not yet enlighten'd, dare presume to look
 Thro time's abyss ? But should the flatterer, hope,
 Anticipating see that happy time,
 Those whiter moments—Prince, remember, then,
 The noble lessons by affliction taught :
 Preserve the quick humanity it gives,
 The pitying social sense of human weakness ;
 Yet keep thy generous fortitude entire,
 The manly heart, that to another's woe
 Is tender, as superiour to it's own.

D

Learn

Learn to submit : yet learn to conquer fortune.
 Attach thee firmly to the virtuous deeds
 And offices of life : to life itself,
 With all it's vain and transient joys, sit loose.
 Chief, let devotion to the sovereign Mind,
 A steady, chearful, absolute dependance
 On his best wisest government, possess thee.

ALFRED.

I thank thee, father : and O witness, heaven,
 Whose eye the heart's profoundest depth explores !
 That if not to perform my regal task ;
 To be the common father of my people,
 Patron of honor, virtue and religion ;
 If not to shelter useful worth, to guard
 His well-earn'd portion from the sons of rapine,
 And deal out justice with impartial hand ;
 If not to spread, on all good men, thy bounty,
 The treasures trusted to me, not my own ;
 If not to raise anew our *English* name,
 By peaceful arts that grace the land they bless,
 And generous war to humble proud oppressors :
 Yet more ; if not to build the public weal,
 On that firm base which can alone resist
 Both time and chance, on liberty and law ;
 If I for these great ends am not ordain'd—
 May I ne'er poorly fill the throne of *England* !

HERMIT,

A MASQUE.

19

HERMIT.

Still may thy breast these sentiments retain,
In prosperous life.

ALFRED.

Could it destroy or change
Such thoughts as these, prosperity were ruin.

D 2

Two

Two SPIRITS sing the following hymn.

FIRST.

*O joy of joys, to lighten woe !
Best pleasure, pleasure to bestow !
What raptures then his heart expand,
Who lives to bless a grateful land.*

Second SPIRIT.

*For him, ten thousand bosoms beat ;
His name consenting crouds repeat :
From soul to soul the passion runs,
And subjects kindle into sons.*

HERMIT.

HERMIT.

ALFRED, once more—since favour'd thus of heaven,
Since thus to cheer thee and confirm thy virtue
He sends his angels forth—remember well,
Should better days restore thy prosperous fortunes,
The vows these awful beings hear thee make:
Remember and fulfil them.

ALFRED.

O no more—

When those whom heaven distinguishes o'er millions,
And showers profusely power and splendor on them,
Whate'er th' expanded heart can wish; when they,
Accepting the reward, neglect the duty,
Or worse, pervert those gifts to deeds of ruin,
Is there a wretch they rule so base as they?
Guilty, at once, of sacrilege to heaven!
And of perfidious robbery to man!

HERMIT.

Such thoughts become a monarch—but behold,
The glimmering dusk, involving air and sky,
Creeps slow and solemn on. Devotion now,
With eye enraptur'd, as the kindling stars
Light, one by one, all heaven into a glow
Of living fire, adores the Hand divine,
Who form'd their orbs and pour'd forth glory on them.

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

Then, this good moment, snatch'd from earth's affairs,
Let us employ aright: and, in yon cell,
To Him, with heart sincere, our homage pay,
Who glorious spreads and gracious shuts the day.

End of the First Act.

ACT



ACT II. SCENE I.

EMMA, and other Peasants.

WISH'D evening now is come : but her soft hour,
Close of our daily toil, that wont to sound
Sweet with the shepherd's pipe and virgin's voice,
Is chearless all and mute.

Second SHEPHERDESS.

Heaven's will be ours.

And since no grief can yesterday recall,
Nor change tomorrow's face ; now let us soothe
The present as we may with dance and song,
To lighten sad remembrance.

First

First SHEPHERDESS sings.

I.

*The shepherd's plain life,
Without guilt, without strife,
Can only true blessings impart.
As nature directs,
That bliss he expects
From health and from quiet of heart.*

II.

*Vain grandeur and power,
Those toys of an hour,
Tho mortals are toiling to find;
Can titles or show
Contentment bestow?
All happiness dwells in the mind.*

III.

*Behold the gay rose,
How lovely it grows,
Secure in the depth of the vale.
Yon oak, that on high
Aspires to the sky,
Both lightning and tempest assail.*

IV. *Then*

IV.

*Then let us the snare
Of Ambition beware,
That source of vexation and smart :
And sport on the glade,
Or repose in the shade,
With health and with quiet of heart.*

Here a pastoral dance.

E SCENE

SCENE II.

CORIN, EMMA, PEASANTS.

CORIN.

④ happy hour ! wife, neighbours—such, such news !
I shall run wild with joy !

EMMA.

Speak, shepherd ; say,

What moves thee thus ?

CORIN.

The king is in our isle !

EMMA.

Can it be possible ?

PEASANT.

What do I hear ?

CORIN.

As now I pass'd beneath the hermit's cell,
I heard that wonderous man pronounce his name.
O EMMA, the poor stranger whom we serv'd
And honour'd, all-unknowing of his state,
Is he ! our great and gracious ALFRED !

ALL.

ALL.

Heaven!

Then are we blest indeed!

CORIN.

My humble cottage,
 Long ages hence, when we are dust, my friends,
 In holy pilgrimage oft visited,
 Will draw true *English* knees to worship there,
 As at the shrine of some propitious saint,
 Or angel friendly to mankind—The thought
 Brings tears into mine eyes.—

EMMA.

Does joy deceive

My sense? or did I hear a distant voice

Sigh thro' the vale and wake the mournful echo?

*The following song
 is sung by a person unseen.*

I.

*Ye woods and ye mountains unknown,
 Beneath whose pale shadows I stray,
 To the breast of my charmer alone
 These sighs bid sweet echo convey.
 Wherever he pensively leans,
 By fountain, on hill, or in grove,
 His heart will explain what she means,
 Who sings both from sorrow and love.*

CORIN.

The evening wood-lark warbles in her voice.
 Who can this be ?

EMMA.

Peace, peace : she sings again.

II.

*More soft than the nightingale's song,
 O waft the sad sound to his ear :
 And say, tho' divided so long,
 The friend of his bosom is near.
 Then tell him what years of delight,
 Then tell him what ages of pain,
 I felt while I liv'd in his sight !
 I feel till I see him again !*

CORIN.

CORIN.

What think ye, friends? Such moving, melting softness
Breathes in these sweet complainings, as till now
Mine ear was never blest with. Let us go
And find out this new wonder.

Second SHEPHERDESS.

Look, the king!

EMMA.

Now, by my holidame, a goodly person,
And of most noble mein.

CORIN.

Disturb him not.



S C E N E III.

ALFRED, HERMIT.

HERMIT.

Your enterprize is bold—and may be fatal:
Yet I condemn it not. All is not rashness,
That valor of more common size might think,
And caution term so. Souls of nobler scope,
Whose comprehensive sight beholds at once
And weighs the sum of things, are their own rule,
And to be judg'd but by themselves alone.

ALFRED.

Then, in the name of that inspiring Power,
 Whose deputy I am, who sends me forth
 His minister of vengeance, on I go
 To victory, or death.

[As he is going out, he stops short.]

What do I feel ?

Save me ! a holy horror stirs my frame,
 And shivers thro each vein—What shapes are these,
 Athwart the gloom, that strike my dazled sense ?
 Betwixt and where yon mist along the marsh
 Rowls blue it's vapoury wave, some unseen hand
 Pourtrays in air the visionary scene
 Distinct and full, in brighter colors drawn
 Than summer suns reflect on evening cloud,
 When all it's fluid bosom glows with gold—
 And now, it reddens into blood !

HERMIT, *who had
 observed him fixedly, half-aside.*

Ere night

Withdraws her shade, new accidents and strange
 Will shake this island's peace.

[To him.]

Now, ALFRED, now,

Be all the hero shewn.

ALFRED.

What may this mean ?

SCENE

SCENE IV.

ALFRED, CORIN.

CORIN, *kneeling*.

My honor'd sovereign—

ALFRED.

How is this! ha! what!

Discover'd by this peasant—Be it so:

The plain man is most loyal.

CORIN:

England's wealth,
The pearly stores her circling seas contain,
Should never shake your CORIN's faith—

ALFRED.

But what
Alarms thee thus?

CORIN.

My fears are for my king.
Some strangers, Sir—their habits speak them *Danes*—
Have found our isle. Look this way.

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

Be of courage.

Now, I perceive them. Thro the evening shade
 Their armor gleams a faint and moving light.
 Westward they turn, and strike into the path
 That opens on this plain. Retire we, shepherd,
 Behind yon dusky elm ; from whence, unseen,
 We may discern their numbers and their purpose.



S C E N E V.

DANES *passing along.**First DANE.*

No more. 'Twas she : I could not be deceiv'd.
 A lover's eye is as the eagle's sharp,
 And kens his prey from far—But list a while,
 If sound of human voice, or bleat of flocks
 May guide our lost enquiry thro this wild.

Second DANE.

No : all is loneliness around, and hush'd
 As our dead northern wastes at midnight hour.
 Our gods protect us ! Prince, it was most rash,
 So few our numbers, at this close of day :
 Headlong to plunge amid these horrid shades,
 Where danger lurks unseen.

First

First DANE.

How ! know'st thou not
 That *England* is no more ? Her sons of war,
 To dens and caverns fled, like fearful hares
 Sit trembling at each blast the chill wind blows.
 Her king himself or sleeps in dust, or roams
 Wild on the pathless mountain. As for me ;
 Our country gods, those spirits that possess
 The boundless wilderness, that love to dwell
 With dreary solitude and night profound,
 Will guard the son of *IVAR*, to whose house
 Their vassalage is bound by magic spell.
 Come on. She must be found, this unknown fair
 Who fir'd me at first view ; and rages still
 A fever in my youthful blood. Away.



S C E N E VI.

ALFRED, CORIN, *advancing.*

CORIN.

They are but three.

ALFRED.

And were that number trebled,
 This island is their grave ; this sacred spot,

F

Fair

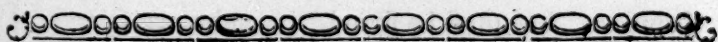
Fair freedom's last retreat. We must, we will
 Preserve it, all-inviolate and holy,
 From impious infidels: or, with our blood,
 If now we perish, sanctify it's earth
 For after-times to visit and revere.

CORIN.

Lift, lift, my lord—

ALFRED.

What noise was that?—By heaven,
 The shrieks of women! Now, stern vengeance guide
 The sword we draw.



SCENE VII.

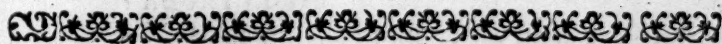
EMMA, *and other peasants.*

EMMA.

Ah, whither shall we fly?

Immortal virgin! queen of mercy! save us—
 See, see, my friends, they seize the lovely stranger—
 They bear her off—Behold the king appears—
 My husband too—Now, heaven, defend alike
 The mighty and the mean, the prince and peasant!
 Two of them fall beneath our monarch's arm—
 The third, my CORIN—O I dare no more
 Look that way—Yet I must—The third is slain!
 O gallant shepherd! O most happy hour!

SCENE



SCENE VIII.

ALFRED, CORIN,
supporting the lady.

ALFRED.

This way, brave shepherd, from these closer shades—
Here the free air and breezy glade will rouse
Her fainting spirits—So—Who may she be?
Perhaps, some worthy heart at this sad moment
Akes for her safety.

ELTRUDA.

Save me, save me, heaven!

ALFRED:

Ye powers! what do I hear?—Yes—yes—'tis she!
My wife, my queen! the treasure of my soul!

ELTRUDA.

My ALFRED!

ALFRED:

My ELTRUDA!

ELTRUDA.

Can it be?

Or is it all th' illusion of my fear?

O no: 'tis he—my lord! my life! my husband!

My guardian angel ALFRED.

F 2

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

My ELTRUDA !

Black horror chills me while I view the brink,
The dreadful precipice, on which we stood—
And was it thee I rescu'd from these ruffians—
O Providence amazing !—thee, ELTRUDA !

ELTRUDA.

I tremble still !—from worse than death deliver'd !
And am I then secure in ALFRED's arms ?

ALFRED.

There let me hold thee ; lull thy fears to rest :
There hush thy soul with everlasting fondness.
The panting bird so flutters, just escap'd
The fowler's snare.

ELTRUDA.

My heart, my heart is full—

And must o'erflow in tears. A thousand thoughts
Are busy here—That ever we should meet
In such a dire extremity !—Ah me !
That ever ALFRED's family and children
Should need the shelter of his single arm !

ALFRED.

My children !—where, where are they ?

ELTRUDA.

Turn thine eyes

To yonder cottage: there conceal'd—

ALFRED.

My CORIN,

Fly, bring them to my arms. But say, my love,
Why didst thou leave the convent, where I plac'd thee ?

Why,

Why, unprotected, trust thee to a land,
A barbarous land, where violence inhabits?
Our hospitable *England* is no more.

ELTRUDA.

Alas! my ALFRED, even the peaceful cells,
Where safe beneath religion's holy veil
Her cloister'd votaries dwelt, from impious *Danes*
No reverence claim. The villages around,
Dispers'd and flying wild before their arms,
Inform'd us, a near party, on whose course
Destruction waits, were marching full to us.
Instant I fled. Two faithful servants bore
Our children off: and heaven has sav'd us all!

ALFRED.

O welcome to my soul!—O happy ALFRED!
Thus to have rescu'd what the feeling heart
Most dear and precious holds, from men who war
With earth and heaven.

ELTRUDA.

Tho terrible at first,
Blest be the tempest that has driven me hither,
Into this safe, this sacred harbor!

ALFRED.

Come,
O come, and here repose thee from the storm,
Within these sheltering arms.

ELTRUDA, *holding him off.*

Yet—let me view thee—
My king and husband—do I find thee thus?

[falling into his arms.]

Unknown!

Unknown ! unserv'd ! unhonor'd ! none to tend thee !
 To soothe thy woes, to watch thy broken slumbers,
 With every fonder service, pious love
 Best knows to pay !—There is in love a power,
 There is a soft divinity that draws,
 Even from distress, those transports that delight
 The breast they pain, and it's best powers exalt
 Above all taste of joys from vulgar life !

ALFRED.

O 'tis too much—thou all that makes life glorious !
 Nay look not on me with this sweet dejection ;
 Thro tears that pierce the soul—

My children too !

My little ones ! Come to your fire's embrace :
 'Tis all he can bestow—In them behold
 What human grandeur is—The peasant's offspring
 Have some retreat, some safe, tho lowly home :
 But you, my babes, you have no habitation !
 With pain and peril wandering thro a land,
 A ruin'd country you were born to rule !
 The thought unmans my reason.

SCENE



S C E N E IX.

ALFRED, ELTRUDA, HERMIT.

HERMIT.

I have heard

Thy fond complainings, ALFRED.

ALFRED.

You have then,

Good father, heard the cause that wrings them from me.

HERMIT.

The human race are sons of sorrow born :

And each must have his portion. Vulgar minds

Refuse, or crouch beneath their load : the brave

Bear theirs without repining.

ALFRED.

Who can bear

The shaft that wounds him thro an infant's side ?

When whom we love, to whom we owe protection,

Implore the hand we cannot reach to save them.

HERMIT.

Weep not, ELTRUDA.—Yet, thou art a king ;

All private passions fall before that name.

Thy subjects claim thee whole.

I

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

Can public trust,
 O reverend sage ! destroy the softer ties
 That twine around the parent's yearning heart ?
 This holy passion heaven itself infus'd,
 And blended with the stream that feeds our life.
 All nature feels it intimate and deep,
 And all her sons of instinct and of reason.

HERMIT.

Then shew that passion in it's noblest form.
 Think what a task it is, to rear those minds,
 On whom the fate of millions, general bliss,
 Or universal misery, depends.

ALFRED.

That task then, difficult alike and noble,
 Be thine, O sacred sage ; to whose try'd wisdom
 I, henceforth, solely trust their tender years.
 Let truth and virtue be their earliest teachers.
 Keep from their ear the syren-voice of flattery ;
 Keep from their eye the harlot-form of vice,
 Who spread, in every court, their silken snares,
 And charm but to betray. Betimes instruct them,
 Superior rank demands superior worth ;
 Pre-eminence of valor, justice, mercy :
 But chief, that tho exalted o'er mankind,
 They are themselves but men—frail suffering dust ;
 From no one injury of human lot
 Exempt : but fever'd by the same heat, chill'd
 By the same cold, torn by the same disease,
 That scorches, freezes, racks, and kills the beggar.

Should

Should fairer days, returning, smile again
On *England* and on me—

Ha! EDWIN here?

This way, my friend—speak softly—

EDWIN *whispers the king aside.*

How!—'tis well!—

Back to thy post: I follow on the instant—

Yet stay—Behold my queen, and infant-sons!

EDWIN—thy king's whole wealth is there summ'd up!

Nay, wipe thine eyes: and tell my gallant friends

What thou hast seen. The tale will lend new force

To each man's arm, and with redoubled weight

Urge every well-aim'd blow. Hence! speed thee well.

ELTRUDA—we must part—

ELTRUDA.

What do I hear?

My life, my love—

ALFRED.

Part for a few sad moments,

That our next meeting may be long and happy.

ELTRUDA.

What leave me now? O my presaging heart!

Already leave me! 'Tis the dreadful call

Of glory, somewhat perilously great,

And big with urgent haste, that tears thee from me,

Oh ALFRED—

ALFRED.

No fond weakness now be shewn,

ELTRUDA, no distrust of virtue's fate.

Thou and thy children are, at present, safe

G

In

In this wise Hermit's care. For what remains ;
 My cause is just, my fortune in His hand
 Who reigns supreme, almighty and all-good.

* That Power who stills the raging of the main,
 The rage of all our foes can render vain.
 To his unerring will resign'd sincere,
 I fear that God, and know no other fear !

End of the Second Act.

* Translated from RACINE'S *ATHALIE*.

Celui, qui met un frein à la fureur des flots,
 Sçait aussi des méchans arrêter les complots.
 Soumis avec respect à sa volonté sainte,
 Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, & n'ay point d'autre crainte.

A C T



ACT III. SCENE I.

EMMA, *and other shepherdesses.*

EMMA.

YES, EDITH, we will watch, till morning shines,
Around this cottage, now made rich and glorious—
Who durst have thought such wonders?—by a queen,
And her bright offspring! Thou, mean while, invoke,
With sounds of soothing strain, the gentle sleep
To pour his timely vapours on their eye-lids.

G 2

EDITH

EDITH *sings*.

I.

*In cooling stream, O sweet repose,
Those balmy dews distill,
That steal the mourner from his woes,
And bid despair be still.*

II.

*Prolong the smiling infant's rest,
Who yet no sorrow knows :
But O the mother's bleeding breast
To softest peace compose !*

III,

*For her the fairest dreams adorn,
That wave on fancy's wing ;
The purple of ascending morn,
The bloom of opening spring.*

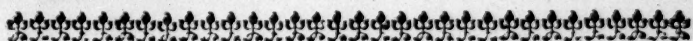
IV.

*Let all, that soothes the soul or charms,
Her midnight hour employ ;
Till blest again in ALFRED's arms,
She wakes to real joy.*

EMMA.

EMMA.

Alas ! she comes. Let us withdraw, my friends:
 Her sorrows claim all reverence : and 'tis meet
 We leave her to herself.

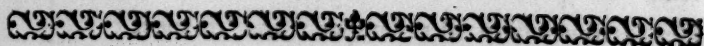


SCENE II.

ELTRUDA.

Amid the depth of this surrounding gloom,
 While nature all is hush'd, ELTRUDA wakes
 To think—and to be wretched. Oh my love !
 My heart's sole rest and refuge ! Where is he !
 Victor or vanquish'd—what is now his fate ?
 Moments of terror—Ha ! what noise was that ?
 Each sound appalls me, and each thought is death !
 'Twas more than fancy sure : it seem'd the groan
 Of bleeding men—O every guardian wing
 Of saints and angels shield him ! from his breast
 Turn wide the flying shaft, the lifted steel,
 And, sheltering him, a ruin'd nation save.
 Who comes ? Speak, quickly speak.

SCENE



S C E N E III.

ERTRUDA, *an ATTENDANT.*

ATTENDANT.

My gracious mistress,
Why to the breath of this untimely sky
Expose your health?

ERTRUDA.

Away—the health, the life
Of *England* is at stake: my ALFRED fights—
Perhaps he bleeds: and I am lost for ever!
But is there none, no messenger return'd
From that dark scene of death?

ATTENDANT.

No, madam, none.

ELTRUDA.

O my torn, tortur'd heart! What is the hour?

ATTENDANT.

By yon faint light, that glimmering steals along
From east to north, I guess the morning near.

ELTRUDA.

ELTRUDA.

Then all my hopes and fears suspended hang
 On this dread moment's wing—Ah! hear'st thou not
 The trumpet's distant voice?

ATTENDANT.

It speaks aloud,
 And shakes the echoing woods.



S C E N E IV.

ELTRUDA, ATTENDANT, EMMA, *and others.*

EMMA.

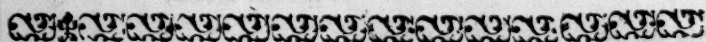
O mighty queen,
 They come, the murderers come. Protect us, heaven,
 [kneeling.
 Our husbands, and our infants, from their rage.
 Without thine aid we perish.

ELTRUDA.

O my soul!
 Why what a sight is this? A tyrant's eye
 Might melt with pity o'er it. Thou supreme,
 [kneeling.
 All-ruling arbiter of human fate!
 Whose universal family is nature,

On

On ALFRED, on his children, on his people,
 Look down with mercy—for their cause is thine,
 And now, even now, deciding!



SCENE V.

HERMIT, ELTRUDA, *and others.*

HERMIT.

Glorious princess!

This is indeed to reign. Comfort, great queen:
 It comes, it comes! the promis'd scene discloses!
 I see the *Danish* raven droop his wing!
 See *England's* genius soar again to heaven,
 And better days in white succession roll,
 Without a cloud between!

*The clouds break away; and on the edge of a rock, in
 full view, a spirit is seen amidst a blaze of light,
 who sings the following*

O D E.

O D E.

*From those eternal regions bright,
 Where suns that never set in night,
 Diffuse the golden day;
 Where spring, unfading, pours around,
 O'er all the dew-impearled ground,
 Her thousand colors gay;
 The messenger of heaven's high King,
 I come; and happy tidings bring,
 To cheer this drooping isle:
 Behold her cruel foes are fled!
 Behold fair freedom lifts the head,
 And all his children smile!
 The dawn, that now unveils her skies,
 See England's future glory rise:
 A better age is born!
 Then, let each voice of sprightly strain,
 Around from warbling hill and plain,
 Hail this triumphant morn!*

Grand CHORUS.

*Then let each voice of sprightly strain,
 Around from warbling hill and plain,
 Hail this triumphant morn!*

H

SCENE



S C E N E VI.

ELTRUDA, HERMIT, *Earl of DEVON.*

DEVON, *kneeling.*

Success is ours—

ELTRUDA.

The king, my lord—

DEVON.

Returns,

Victorious and unhurt.

ELTRUDA.

Then, first, to heaven,

For this best news I humbly bend the knee

In grateful adoration.—Now proceed,

My lord ; and leave no circumstance untold

Of this amazing night.

DEVON.

Her misty shade

Had now enclos'd us round ; when, led secure

By EDWIN's eye, the darkest depth I reach'd

Of *Kinwith-wood*. We parted.—He, in haste,

Back to his charge. I thro' the cavern'd path,

Whose inlet there is found, descending dark,

Long, under ground, it's solitary maze

Pursu'd

Pursu'd as best I could; and rose at length
 Safe in the fort our foes had close begirt.
 'Twas joy, 'twas rapture there, among the few
 Who wish'd, not hop'd, my unforeseen return.

ELTRUDA.

What follow'd this, my lord?

DEVON.

Prepare, I cry'd,
 To live or die like men. Our king survives;
 And, now in arms, expects your instant aid.
 To him then let us cut our glorious way
 Thro yonder camp: or, if we nobly fall,
 There offer to the genius of our country
 Whole hecatombs of *Danes*.—As if one soul
 Had mov'd them all, around their heads they whirl'd
 Their sounding faulchions—"Lead us to those *Danes*:
 Revenge and *England*"—was the general cry.

ELTRUDA.

I feel it here: my heart applauds their virtue.
 How was this follow'd on?

DEVON.

To souls resolv'd
 Small preparation needs—The clock struck three—
 At once our gates flew wide: at once we rush'd
 Prone on the *Danish* trenches—While behind,
 Just to the fatal instant, ALFRED rose
 In all his terrors; o'er the mounded camp
 Tempestuous drove; from space to space along
 Spred slaughter and dismay. Nor rest, nor pause:
 Back'd by his ardent band, right on he bore
 Even to the tent, where sunk in sleep profound

The *Danish* monarch lay. His guards, a few
Whom honor prompted to defend their prince,
Fell round him. He yet lives : but, O dire chance
Of cruel war!—a prisoner and in chains.

ELTRUDA.

A fall how terrible ! My breast is thrill'd,
And in the fierce barbarian mourns the captive.

HERMIT.

Such fortune ever wait on wild ambition !
On war unjust that desolates whole nations,
And leaves a world in tears for one man's guilt !
But yet—fallen as he is—he knows not yet
What new distress, what keener pangs attend
To wound his inmost heart—That trumpet speaks
The king's approach—Ye ministers unseen !

*Spirits, whom the King of kings
Gives to watch o'er human things,
Hither, from each blest abode :
From the morning's purple road ;
From the solar world of light ;
From the planet of the night ;
From the rainbow's evening-round ;
From the blue horizon's bound ;
Hither, borne thro seas of air,
Sons of life and love repair !
And now, with all that charms the eye,
This monarch's triumph dignify.*

SCENE



S C E N E VII.

To a grand flourish of instruments the scene, gradually opening, discovers several triumphal arches, adorned with trophies and garlands, and from space to space beautifully illuminated. The procession is led by shepherdesses, strewing flowers.

First SHEPHERDESS.

*Arise, sweet messenger of morn,
With thy mild beam, our skies adorn:
For long as shepherds pipe and play,
This, this shall be a holy-day.*

Second SHEPHERDESS.

*See, morn appears; a rosy hue
Steals soft o'er yonder orient blue:
Soon let us meet in trim array,
And frolic out this holy-day!*

These

These are followed by soldiers with palm branches in their hands.. An officer behind bears the Danish standard. Flourish of instruments.

First VOICE.

Swell the trumpet's boldest note !

Second VOICE.

Let the drum it's thunders roll !

BOTH.

*And, as on aery wings they float,
Spread ALFRED's name from pole to pole !*

CHORUS.

*Our sons unborn,
Still on this morn
With annual joy shall tell,
How by his might,
In'daring fight,
The foes of England fell.*

AIR.

AIR.

*Prince, of every fame possesst !
Prince and patriot both confest !
Thy grateful Albion shall to latest days
Roll down thy glories in a tide of praise !*

CHORUS.

*Thy grateful Albion shall to latest days
Roll down thy glories in a tide of praise !*

ELTRUDA.

ELTRUDA.

Yon pictur'd raven—tell me is it not
Their wonderous magic standard !

DEVON.

'Tis the same :

Wrought by the sisters of the *Danish* king,
At midnight's blackest hour ; when the sick moon,
Wrapt in eclipse by their enchanting song,
Down thro the turbid clouds her influence shed
Of baleful power. The sisters ever sung—
“ Shake, standard, shake destruction on our foes.”



S C E N E VIII.

ELTRUDA, HERMIT, and the others.

ALFRED *passing under the triumphal arches : The sun,
at the same time, rising above the horizon.*

ELTRUDA:

He comes ! the conqueror comes—

ALFRED.

In these lov'd arms

To lose all sorrow, and all bliss to find !

ELTRUDA.

ELTRUDA.

O from what fears deliver'd for thy life,
And in that life for a whole people's being,
I thus receive thee back ! thus fold thee safe !
Love only, love like mine, can feel, not utter !

ALFRED.

To Him ascend all praise ! whose will inspir'd,
Whose arm sustain'd this action, that restores
My better name—and, O more glorious still,
Of nobler, dearer consequence !—restores
Lost *England* to her vigor, fame and freedom.

HERMIT.

For her, O ALFRED, your more arduous task
But now begins : this conquest to secure ;
To spread it's influence wide, and, well improv'd
By unremitting vigilance and valor,
Make this one blow decisive of her fate.
But now behold, to animate thy hope,
In mystic shew express'd what late thy fortune
Seem'd to portend ; and what the brightening scene
With fairer promise opens.

Four Furies arise, to the sound of instruments in discord, at four different openings from under ground, with torches in their left hands, and bloody swords in their right. They form a confused Pyrrhic dance, shaking and pointing their swords and torches round the king in their centre : till, upon a change of the music into regular harmony, descends the Genius of England, with a crowned sword in one hand, and a lawrel wreath in the other. On sight of whom the four Furies sink thro the openings they arose from. He presents the crowned sword and lawrel-branch at the feet of the king, and reascends, while the following song is sung.

*At last, at last,
Our night is past,
The gloomy night of fear :
And o'er our skies
Fair beams arise
Of peace and joy sincere.
Then let triumph abound !
Let ecstasy reign !
Till these hills all around,—around
Improving each strain,
Our transports resound ;—resound
The heart-felt transport that succeeds to pain !*

ALFRED.

ALFRED.

I hail th' auspicious omen—but ah me!

ELTRUDA, see, where comes th' unhappy king!

ELTRUDA.

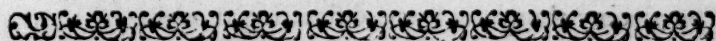
Oh sight of woe!

ALFRED.

Retire, my gentle love:

An interview like this were too severe

For thy soft nature.



SCENE IX.

ALFRED, HERMIT, DANISH KING.

ALFRED, *after a pause.*

See, at last, O king,

In thy sad fate, which even a foe laments,

See and acknowledge heaven's impartial hand.

For violated oaths and plunder'd realms,

For the heap'd guilt of base perfidious war,

This retribution is most just.

I 2

DANE

DANE.

Away—

I own no guilt : or kings of every age
 Are criminal, thy ancestors and mine.
 What is all war, but more diffusive robbery
 Made sacred by success ? What object swells
 A monarch's highest aim ?—increase of power
 And universal sway. This glorious end
 All means must sanctify, that can secure.

For what remains—Of bondage, or of death,
 The lesser ill, I reckon not. But, by THOR,
 The gloomy thunderer ! one distracting thought
 Bends my soul's strongest temper ; sinks me down
 Beneath my own contempt.

ALFRED.

Such fears dismiss
 As must dishonor both. The truly brave
 His foe in equal arms will dare to meet :
 Vanquish'd, he dares not injure, nor insult him.

DANE.

Nor that, nor ought without myself could thus
 Unman me. No : my hell is here, within—
 How ! like a wretch, a nameless slave who fights
 But for vile hire—in my own tent surpris'd !
 Asleep ! unarm'd !—these shameful chains thrown o'er me,
 And not one blow exchange'd ! O baser far
 Than that low herd, who fled without a wound
 Before thy sword.—They but deserted him,
 Who first himself abandon'd—But thy gods
 Were vigilant for thee : while mine all slept.

ALFRED.

Your gods are idols : that sole Power I serve,
 Supreme and one, is universal Lord
 O'er earth and heaven. Be it my daily task,
 As 'tis my noblest theme, to own, by Him
 Alone I conquer'd : as for him alone
 I wish to reign—by making mankind blest !

DANE.

No more—Convey me to your basest dungeon.
 Let me explore it's darkest depth ; shut out
 The light of heaven ; forget there is a sun
 Who shines on my dishonor. Would I might
 Exclude too my own thoughts—But yet, my son
 Lives—and is free ! lives to revenge my fall !
 To wash my stains in blood—Ha ! where was he
 This fatal night, when every god forsook me !
 Where, where was IVAR then ?

HERMIT.

Unhappy prince !

That son, alas !—

DANE.

Ha ! what ! why, who art thou ?

What of my son ?

HERMIT.

Thy trust in him is vain.

To his own rashness and intemperate lust,
 This very night, a victim, here, he fell—
 Lo ! where he lies.

DANE.

DANE.

My son—my son—Ha! dead—

My only child!—But no: I will not weep.

Is he not safe, beyond misfortune's hand?

Beyond all feeling of his father's shame?

False hope, farewell!—Let madness, let despair

Surround me, seize me whole; till life's loath'd flame,

For ever quench'd in death, resigns me o'er

To darkness and oblivion.

ALFRED.

Dire reverse!

Dreadful impatience!—But these roving *Danes*

A stricter watch demand. Means more effectual

Must now be try'd, from our insulted shores

To keep aloof this still-descending war.

'Tis naval strength, that must our peace assure.

Be this the first high object of my care,

To wall us round with well-appointed fleets.

In them our sole dominion of the sea,

Our wealth and grandeur, can alone be found,

The one great bulwark of our separate world.

HERMIT.

ALFRED, go on; the noble task pursue,

Thy safety urges, and thy fame demands.

Yes, in her fleets, let *England* ever seek

Her sure defence: by them, thro' every age,

At home secure, renown'd and fear'd abroad,

Great arbiters of nations—Ha! the scene,

The radiant prospect opens full before me!

Thro' distant depths of time transported down,

The

I see whole moving forests, from her hills
 Uprooted, bound triumphant o'er the main !
 White tracks of glory brighten *Albion's* skies,
 As navies grow, as commerce swells her sail
 With every breeze that under heaven can blow,
 From either pole ; thro worlds yet unexplor'd,
 In east and west, that to thy sons disclose
 Their golden stores, their wealth of various name,
 And lavish pour it on BRITANNIA's lap !

ALFRED.

Thy words new sun-shine thro my breast diffuse,
 And smiling calm. But let us, HERMIT, try,
 By justice, mercy, arms and arts improv'd,
 By freedom fenc'd around with sacred laws,
 Our promis'd bliss to merit and adorn.
 Now, to my glorious task—

HERMIT.

Yet ere you go,
 One moment, ALFRED, backward cast your eyes
 On this unfolding scene ; where, pictur'd true,
 As in a mirror, rises fair to sight
 Our *England's* genuine strength and future fame.

*Here is seen the ocean in prospect, and ships sailing
 along. Two boats land their crews. One sailor
 sings the following Ode : after which, the rest join
 lively dance.*

I. *When*

I.

*When BRITAIN first at heaven's command,
 Arose from out the azure main ;
 This was the charter of the land,
 And guardian angels sung this strain :*
 Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
 BRITONS never will be slaves.

II.

*The nations, not so blest as thee,
 Must in their turns to tyrants fall :
 While thou shalt flourish great and free,
 The dread and envy of them all.*
 Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
 BRITONS never will be slaves.

III.

*Should war, should faction shake thy isle,
 And sink to poverty and shame ;
 Heaven still shall on BRITANNIA smile,
 Restore her wealth, and raise her name.*
 Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
 BRITONS never will be slaves.

IV.

*As the loud blast, that tears thy skies,
Serves but to root thy native oak ;
Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
From foreign, from domestic stroke.*

*Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
BRITONS never will be slaves.*

V.

*How blest the prince, reserv'd by fate,
In adverse days to mount thy throne !
Renew thy once triumphant state,
And on thy grandeur build his own !*

*Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
BRITONS never will be slaves.*

VI.

*His race shall long, in times to come,
So heaven ordains, thy sceptre wield,
Rever'd abroad, below'd at home,
And be, at once, thy sword and shield.*

*Rule, BRITANNIA, rule the waves :
BRITONS never will be slaves.*

The End of the Masque.

U. S. A.



E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by Mrs. CLIVE.

*W*hile our grave Hermit, busy above stairs,
 Employs his serious head on state affairs,
 Gallants, look here—faith I have plaid the rogue,
 And stole his wand—by way of epilogue.
 You critics, there below, had best be civil :
 For I, with this same rod, can play the devil ;
 Ty all your busy tongues up, one by one,
 And turn what share of brains you have—to stone :
 The beau's soft scull convert to solid rock—
 What then ?—the wig will always have it's block.
 But for the men of sad and solemn face,
 The deep dark sages in or out of place,
 Who much in port and politics delight,
 Small change, God knows, will make them statues quite.
 The ladies too—but now these witlings sneer—
 No, fair ones, you shall meet no insult here :
 I only hint my power—that, if I list,
 I yet can charm you two long hours from whist.
 But, cards are ready, you are all bespoke—
 To spoil a dozen drums, would be no joke.
 Besides, 'twould be mere arbitrary sway :
 Such as, of old, was us'd at Nero's play,

*Who, when he sung and fiddled to the town,
 Still, as his subjects yawn'd, would knock them down.
 No, sirs; to gain a heart, we must not teize:
 Who would engage it, first should aim to please.
 This part be mine: and, if I now succeed
 To my own wish, you will be pleas'd indeed.
 Then—for a trial: thus, I wave my hand,
 To prove the power of this enchanting wand.*

*On waving her wand,
 The scene opens, and discovers a beautiful valley, bordered
 on each hand by forest trees, rising irregularly, and form-
 ing from space to space various groves. The prospect
 behind is a landscape of woodlands, and of mountains
 that ascend above one another, till the last seem to lose
 themselves in the sky. From the summit of the nearest
 hill a river pours down, by several falls, in a natural
 cascade. The warbling of birds is heard.*

FIRST ENTRY.

A husbandman, his wife, and family.

SHE.

*How soft is the scene !
The woodlands how green !
What charms in the nightingale's lay !*

HE.

*Fair peace, that now reigns
On our hills and our plains,
'Tis peace bids all nature be gay.*

CHORUS.

'Tis peace bids all nature be gay.

SHE.

The distaff,

HE.

The plow,

BOTH.

*Shall employ our hands now,
For ourselves and our children alone.*

HE.

*Secure from the foe,
We shall reap what we sow :
And the year, the whole year is our own !*

CHORUS.

And the year, the whole year is our own.

She

She waves her wand. SECOND ENTRY.

A shepherd, and shepherdefs.

They run into each others arms.

SHE.

*If to meet is all this pleasure,
Sure, to part was killing pain!*

BOTH.

Yes, to part was killing pain!

HE.

*If 'twas grief to lose our treasure,
How transporting to regain!*

BOTH.

O 'tis transport to regain!

HE.

Thus possessing—

SHE.

every blessing

Crowns the maid—

HE.

And crowns her swain.

BOTH.

Crowns the happy maid and swain!

She waves her wand. THIRD ENTRY.

Soldiers descend the mountain by two different paths : at the bottom they lay down the spoils with which they are loaded ; and then, advancing, two of them sing the following ballad.

FIRST MAN.

*We have fought ; we have conquer'd : and England once more
Shall flourish in fame, as she flourish'd before.
Our fears are all fled, with our enemies slain :
* Could they rise up anew —*

SECOND.

*We would slay them again.
His monarch to serve, or to do himself right,
No Englishman yet ever flinch'd from the fight.
For why, neighbours all, we are free as the king :
* 'Tis this makes us brave —*

FIRST.

*And 'tis this makes us sing.
Our prince too, for this, will be thankful to fate —
It is, in our freedom, he finds himself great !
No force can be wanting, nor meaner court-arts :
* He is master of all —*

SECOND.

*Who will reign in our hearts !
Should rebels within, or should foes from without,
Bring the crown on his head, or his honor, in doubt ;*

* The verses marked with an
asterisk to be sung a second time by both,

We

She

We are ready—

FIRST.

*Still ready—and boldly foretell,
That conquest shall ever with liberty dwell!*

SECOND.

*But now, bring us forth, as the crown of our labor,
Much wine and good cheer—*

FIRST.

*With the pipe and the tabor.
Let our nymphs all be kind, and our shepherds be gay :
For England, Old England, is happy to day.*

CHORUS.

*Let our nymphs all be kind, and our shepherds be gay :
For England, Old England, is happy to day !*

*They all mix in a dance,
to the pipe and tabor.*

The End.